

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. In a cable communication system, a method for a set top box to receive a software
 2 code object, comprising the steps of
 3 receiving a message designating whether to tune to an in-band or an out-of
 4 band channel for receiving the code object;
 5 tuning to the designated channel; and
 6 receiving the code object from the designated channel.

1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the message includes a download control message
 2 having a download flag, and further comprising the steps of reading a value of the
 3 download flag to determine whether to download the code object using an in-band or an
 4 out-of-band channel

1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the code object comprises platform code, and wherein
 2 the step of receiving the code object includes downloading the platform code from the
 3 cable system by using boot code present in the set top box.

1 4. The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of designating the in-band or out-
 2 of-band channel for receiving the code object by means of instructions to a digital access
 3 controller in communication with the set top box.

1 5. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of designating the in-band or out-of-band
 2 channel includes adaptively deciding between the in-band or out-of-band channel in
 3 response to predetermined parameters related to the cable system.

1 6. The method of claim 5, further comprising the steps of monitoring available band
 2 widths of the cable system and deciding between the in-band or out-of-band channel in
 3 response to said monitoring.

1 7. In a cable communication system having at least one digital access controller, and a
 2 plurality of set top boxes in communication with the digital access controller, the
 3 improvement comprising:

4 a download control message including a download flag and information
 5 related to a download channel frequency, the download flag capable of
 6 corresponding to one of an out-of-bound channel and an in-band channel; and

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1 SELECTION BETWEEN AN IN-BAND AND AN OUT-OF-BAND CHANNEL
2 FOR DOWNLOADING CODE TO A SET TOP BOX

3 A cable communication system makes use of a download control message to
4 indicate whether a code object should be downloaded to a set top box via an in-band
5 channel or via an out-of-band channel. In one version, the system includes means for
6 adaptively determining whether to use an in-band channel or an out-of-band channel.
7 The related method includes the steps of receiving a message designating whether to tune
8 to an in-band or an out-of-band channel in order to receive the code object, tuning to the
9 designated channel, and receiving the code object from the designated channel.